lt Gordon E-4, 5 (no date) 1907 AR7 Khasi AR7

[illegible]

PREFACE.

This book is an attempt to give a systematic account of the Khasi people, their manners and customs, their ethnological affinities, their laws and institutions, their religious beliefs, their folk-lore, their theories as to their origin, and their language.

This account would perhaps have assumed a more elaborate and ambitious form were it not that the author has been able to give to it only the scanty leisure of a busy district officer. He has been somewhat hampered by the fact that his work forms part of a series of official publications issued at the expense of the Government of Eastern Bengal and Assam, and that it had to be completed within a prescribed period of time.

The author gladly takes this opportunity to record his grateful thanks to many kind friends who have helped him either with actual contributions to his material, or with not less valued suggestions and criticisms. The arrangement of the subjects discussed is due to Sir Bampfylde Fuller, lately Lieutenant-Governor of the Province, whose kindly interest in the Khasis will long be remembered by them with affectionate gratitude. The Introduction is from the accomplished pen of Sir Charles Lyall, to whom the author is also indebted for much other help and encou-

INTRODUCTION.

121 In 1902 Sir Bampfylde Fuller, then Chief Commissioner
122 of Assam, proposed, and the Government of India sanctioned, the preparation of a series of monographs on the more important tribes and castes of the Province, of which this volume is the first. They were to be undertaken by writers who had had special and intimate experience of the races to be described, the accounts of earlier observers being at the same time studied and incorporated; a uniform scheme of treatment was laid down which was to be adhered to in each monograph, and certain limits of size were prescribed.

124 Major Gurdon, the author of the following pages, who is also, as Superintendent of Ethnography in Assam, editor of the whole series, has enjoyed a long and close acquaintance with the Khasi race, whose institutions he has here undertaken to describe. Thoroughly familiar with their language, he has for three years been in charge as Deputy-Commissioner of the district where they dwell, continually moving among them, and visiting every part of the hospitable region which is called
673 by their name. The administration of the Khasi and
100 Jaintia Hills is an exceptionally interesting field of official responsibility. About half of the district, including the country around the capital, Shillong, is outside the limits of British India, consisting of a collection of small states in political relations, regulated by treaty with the Government of India, which enjoy

St Gordon G-1 (no date) 1904 AR? Khasi AR?

193 high. Interrogative adverbs may either precede or follow the verb, e.g., *nani phi wan* or *phi wan nan*, where do you come from.[1]

121 10. *Conclusion.*—I have endeavoured to note down briefly above some of what seem to be the more prominent features of Khasi Ethnology, reserving a more detailed account of the Khasis for the monograph which is under preparation. In publishing this brief account, it is my hope that it may attract criticism by persons who are more familiar with the Khasis than myself, and it is my earnest desire that if experts who are acquainted with the Ethnology of the province of Burma and of that great country comprising the valleys of the Mekong and the Menam, find any points of resemblance between Khasi Ethnology and that of those regions, they will kindly bring these points to my notice, so that perhaps a clue may be found to the origin of the Khasis, which is at present so obscure.

193 [1] In the compilation of this brief notice of the Khasi language, I beg to acknowledge my indebtedness to Dr. Greenes's Shillong Khasi Grammar, the Revd. H. Roberts's Khasi Grammar, and to Nisser Singh's "Notes on the Study of the Khasi language."—P. R. T. G.

9. Godwin-Austen G-3 (no date) 1872 AR7 Khasi AR7

On the Stone Monuments *of the* Khasi Hill Tribes, *and on some of the Peculiar Rites and Customs of the People.* By Major H. H. Godwin-Austen, F.R.G.S., Deputy Superintendent Topographical Survey of India.

121 The increasing interest that is taken at the present day in ethnology and the history of man in past and present ages, more particularly in the customs of semi-civilised races in distant quarters of the world as compared with the state of those races who dwelt in Europe in early historic times, has led me to put together the information I obtained regarding the people of the Khāsi Hill tracts. Their customs are peculiar, and the fact that they are among the very few who erect at the present day monolithic monuments, is alone of great interest.

122 This has not escaped the attention of different travellers, officers of the Indian service and others who have visited that quarter of the Bengal Presidency, and from time to time papers have been published; these are scattered through a number of periodicals, and in no case is a complete record of these Hill people to be found.

Notices on the Garos and Khāsis, as well as many of the other tribes on the north-eastern frontier of Bengal, are generally very short, in some instances mislead, and in some cases do the peo-
123 ple, savages though they be, but little justice; in truth, there is very much to admire in these Hill people, they are in many ways, socially and physically, far above their Bengāli neighbours of the plains; intercourse with them is, in consequence, much pleasanter, easier, and has far greater interest; innate honesty and truth in their manners of dealing often crop out, more especially in villages well within the hills, where contact with the people of the plains is of rare occurrence.

101 I shall notice the best of these papers having reference to tribes inhabiting the range of hills running west to east, south of Assam, from the sharp southern bend of the Brahmaputra up to the Kopili and Diyung river, in long. 92 deg. 45 min., a length of some one hundred and sixty-five miles.

114 In the "Asiatic Researches," vol. iii, published so far back as
113 1792, is a very interesting paper on the Gāros, by Mr. John Eliot; his travels, however, did not extend so far to the east as the Khāsias.

The Rev. A. B. Lish, a missionary of Cherra Poonjee, published an account of the Khāsias in the "Calcutta Christian Observer" for 1838, he gives an account of their mode of breaking eggs for omens, etc.

Neither in M'Cosh's "Topography of Assam," or in Robinson's "Assam," is any newer or better information afforded concerning

[p 1]

KHASI KINSHIP AND SOCIAL ORGANISATION

BY

PROF. K. P. CHATTOPADHYAY.

Introduction

In a paper on Khasi marriage rules Prof. Hodson has tried to explain the special features of the Khasi kinship terms and marriage rules on the hypothesis of a former dual division of Khasi Society, and certain new social forms which came into operation when the dual society broke up (1).

Hodson used for his work, the kinship terms quoted in the Assam Census Report (2), Gordon's work on Khasis (3) and a dictionary by U. Nissorsing. A full list of Khasi kinship terms was published by Rai Bahadur S. C. Roy shortly afterwards (4). The list is stated to have been compiled with the help of the ex- Siem of Cherra, on the genealogical method. The genealogies have not however been printed, and detailed notes are not available.

Recently the writer of this paper proceeded to the village of Mawphlang, the head-quarters of the Khasi State of this name and collected a certain amount of data to discuss this problem. The village is situated to the south-west of Shillong, at a distance of sixteen miles, and has preserved the old customs to a fair extent. It is ruled over by a lyngdoh or priest-chief, assisted by four myntris. At the time of the visit, the lyngdoh was away, suspended by the Political Agent for misgovernment, and the powers of the State were vested in the council of myntris. The senior myntri U Babu Rai, who is an old man

[p.177]

THE KHASI HUTS OF MAWPHLANG

BY

[illegible]

1[illegible] Post-Graduate students of the Department of Anthropology of the University of Calcutta are expected to do a certain amount of field work for practical training. In 1949 a Khasi village was studied by us, the students of the Post-Graduate class, as part of our training, under the guidance of Prof. B. P. Chattopadhyay, the Head of the Department of Anthropology, whom we have to thank also for the photographs used for this paper. This note on Khasi house structure is based on our work in the village of Mawphlang, the headquarters of the Khasi State of the same, in the Khasi Hills, Assam. Our studies included a survey of the village and its house types. Particular attention was paid to the structure of the old type of Khasi house.

2[illegible] Gurdon in his book on the Khasis of Assam describes the Khasi hut as elliptical in shape. But in Mawphlang we found that they can be more strictly said to be "U"-shaped, in ground plan the head of the "U" being the front, the two parallel arms the sides, and a straight line connecting the two ends of the two arms of the "U" the rear. We found this to be the type of most of the old houses of Mawphlang village. As is well known it is the custom among Khasis for the women of a family to live together, until the number of members increases so much that they cannot be provided with room in a single house. Then new houses are built. It is usual for a married couple with children to put up a separate

[illegible]

SOCIAL GROUPINGS AMONG THE KHASIS OF ASSAM

by [illegible]

Dept. of Anthropology, Govt. of India

Calcutta

(Received on [illegible])

Introduction

THE Khasis, who inhabit the United Khasi and Jaintia Hills district of Assam, are matrilineal. Like the Garos, they are matrilocal to matrilocal. Exclusive ownership over family property is claimed by the Khasi women and the youngest daughter (*Ka-Khadduh*) who lives permanently in the house of her mother, is the custodian of the family property and the holder of religion (*Ka-ba-ka-mane*)[1].

This paper deals with the social groupings, namely, the clan, sub-clan and family, of the Khasis. The materials were collected in 1959 from Mawphlang, Cherrapunji and Mawlaih and Mawsmai villages further south of the Khasi State.

Clan-system

In the language of the Khasi, the prefix *Ka* is usually used before the name of a woman or any object belonging to a woman (or considered feminine). The use of *Ka* as a prefix before the name of each social group is suggested to have bearing on Khasi matrility. *Kur* is not a very expressive and exact term for a clan. *Kaliaw*, which is supposed to have sprung from the woman *Sung* (*shil na ka Synshar*)[2] is more exact. Similarly, *Ka-Ki'juh* and *Ka-Sing* denote the sub-clan and family respectively.

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[1] Gordon, P. R. T., *The Khasis*, London, 1914, p. 46.

[2] *Op. cit.*, page 46.

MS.Eng. 1-5 (two items) 1938 A.67 Khasi A.67

IV. THE PLACE OF THE KHASI IN THE WORLD.

By

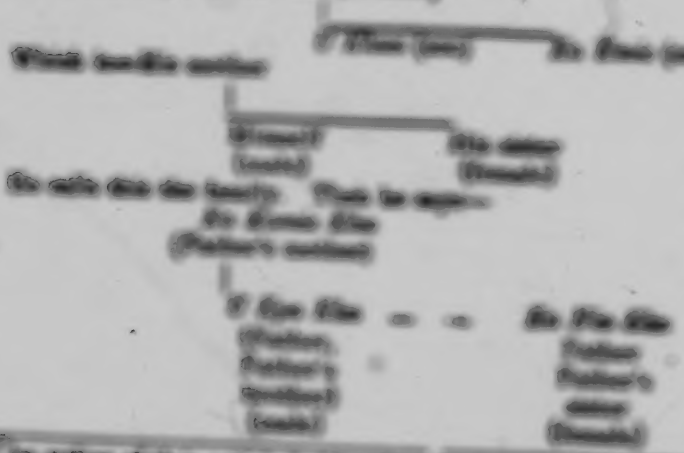
Diana Rose

(1) The Khasi country lies in the hills of the province of Assam in North East India. Khasi clans are exogamous and matrilineal, and the Khasis speak a Mon-Khmer language.

(2) In speaking of the place of the Khasi in the world I intend to explain the Khasi's own view of his relation to other peoples of the world.*

(3) The Khasi is very conscious of his importance. He says a Khasi claims to be the centre of the world. The Khasi has acquired such a feeling of self-importance from his great confidence in himself; and this confidence he has derived from the position in which his relationship-terminology represents him as standing with respect to himself and the world around him. Or, rather, his relationship terms and language are an expression of his attitude and opinion.

(4) The Khasi says—Ka Iwmei (mother)


U Blei (God)
Ka Iwmei (mother)
Khmuid (male)
Ka sdang (female)
So calls the ka kynja. That he says—
Ka Kmie Ka (Father's mother)
U Ka Kia (Father, Father's brother) (male)
Ka Ka Kia Father Father's sister (female)

(5) The centre of all a woman is herself a Khasi (Christian).

the husband. Whichever side is *jaw ka rwiang* (lit. whose power is less strong, less able to resist the evil) will suffer death. The word *rwiang* means more than literally 'fortune.' The word *rwiang* goes with *ropiew* and the two are coupled together as *ka Ropiew ka Rwiang*. *Ropiew* is the person, the man's 'soul.' '*Rwiang*' is the anointing power produced by that person, hence *jaw ka rwiang* means the power anointing the man's person becoming easy of being conquered or subdued. (*Jaw* = easy, pliable.)

In a word, the Khasi's idea of himself is that he stands in the middle of the world. We do not find terms in the language of peoples with the family system to express varieties of relationship to the extent that we have in the Khasi vocabulary. Some of the other languages content themselves with terms for father, mother, uncle, aunt, cousin. They have no words to differentiate the classificatory-descriptive system of terms showing relationship with mother, mother's elder and younger sisters (*mei, mei em, mei sad*); father and his elder and younger brothers (*kpa, kpa em, kap sad*) and father's brother's children (*pawa kha*), father's mother (*mei kha*), mother's mother (*mei sad*,) wife's brother (*kpaw*), husband's brother (*kong*), and so on. We find in the Khasi society, department of social organization intensifying the attitude towards life which is peculiar to the Khasi. The terms are not mere names but serve to show well-defined groups based on an idea of their special functions. As Dr. R. R. Marett says, "Kinship, and everything

else that we do is instinct with a plan; and for the student of religion or of human culture in any of its forms, to account for that plan is the sum and substance of his task.....Whereas, then, there is likelihood that any a posteriori reason existed for believing that to breaking votes for sterility, if indeed it be true in fact at all, these might well have been as a priori conviction to reach the same effect based simply on a fear that to tamper with the fountain-head of human vitality would occasion some to dry up." The Khasi stands in the world as exogamous in his rule of life, and he says "*ang kad kpoiah*", that is, endogamy is forbidden and if it should ever be committed it will render life defiled and corrupt. He says this out of the fear of the knowledge that any act of carelessness in the prohibited area of the source of human life and vitality, which is in the Khasi phrase "*long kein*" (*long* is to be or become, *kein* is man, i.e., to be or become man), will make that source of human life to dry up. So he says, "*Kah I jait I klong*" (*kah*-is exterminated; *jaitia*-kind, species; *klong*-a-nat).

In refutation of such arguments as that the Khasi has no rules of marriage, I shall quote the most sacred pronouncement the Khasi when two persons, the man and the woman, are initiated into that state. Calling upon the name of God the Khasi says-"*U Lei shaw briew wan briw, u' Lei ne ka 'Lei synshar*', (God who creates man and in the source of human life, God who keeps, sustains, preserves), "*Ka ki Khai ne jong, Ka*

PREFACE

19: Nebesa E-S (1951-1954) 1957 ABT Khasi ABT ◆
Garo ABS

From the beginning of my field work, my interest lay in a comparative study of the two systems, not in preparing a complete monograph of the cultures of the two peoples. I used the period of my field research in working among the two peoples alternately, so that I could constantly check from one field to the other as new problems appeared.

The period of my field work was very limited (October, 1938-February, 1939). I did not know the vernacular of either the Garo or the Khasi (Since Garo language has much connection with Tibetan language which I was used to read and speak, I could quickly get used to follow their speech during my field work, but I failed to do so to Khasi language). I employed altogether five local English-speaking interpreters (out of the five, three were pupils, and all but relatives in the villages where I worked). But I already had experience in studying the economic and social organization of other hill peoples in Assam, having carried out two years (1935-1937) field work among tribes in Tripura State and among the Tangkhul Nagas in Manipur State, as also among Himalayan peoples. This all helped me a great deal in my work among the Garo and the Khasi, and is one of the reasons why I could collect such a considerable amount of data, in spite of the above mentioned handicaps of my actual field work. Later on, I carried out field research for four months among the Nayar of Kerala, to provide further data for comparative study.

The Garo and the Khasi present very different structures from each other. In order to present a more effective picture of each structure, I have used different ways of presentation, each of which brings out certain important theoretical implications. The emphasis is laid accordingly upon different features in the case of the Garo, it is the marriage system in relation to the village community; in the case of the Khasi, it is variation in marriage terms related to the structure of descent groups.

I wish to express my profound gratitude, first of all, to the Ella Wigner Foundation in Stockholm, by whose generous grant the field work of this study was carried out, and next to Professor C. Lévi-Strauss, who has consistently encouraged me to complete the manuscript and has very kindly given me this opportunity for publication. I am greatly indebted also to Professor Fred Eggan, Professor Raymond Firth, Professor Meyer Fortes, Professor C. von Fürer-Haimendorf, Dr. E. R. Leach, Dr. Audrey Richards, and Professor D. M. Schneider for much stimulating discussion and helpful comment on the theoretical problems of this study.

I am grateful for invitations from the Department of Anthropology, University of Chicago (1959-1960) and the Department of Cultural Anthropology, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London (1960-1961), as also for an association with the Department

IB: Nehru S-9 (1953-1954) 1967 ART Khasi ART

Chapter III

VILLAGE COMMUNITY

As models of a Khasi village community, I have taken my data for the discussion presented in this chapter from two villages situated in the Kudashimong area, Sohkynthlah and Kongton, with comparative data from Shella and Jaitinga villages.

Sohkynthlah and Kongton are situated in one of the most secluded spots of the Khasi Hills and the economy is shifting cultivation, with millet as its main product. Only a few Christians are found, most of the population are pagans. Shella is situated on the southern border of the Khasi Hills, adjacent to Pakistan. Jaitinga is in the North Cachar Hills, surrounded by patrilineal tribes, such as the Zemi-Naga, the Kuki and the Cachares. The economy of both villages is pan-leaf and orange cultivation. In Shella, Hindu, Christian and pagan are found among the villagers almost in the same proportions, while the Jaitinga villagers are all Christian. The two Kudashimong villages, Shella and Jaitinga, differ from one another not only in their religious and economic aspects, but in court culture, dialect and political organization as well. (Additional information concerning Shella and Jaitinga is given in Appendix.) Shella and Jaitinga are unique among Khasi villages and quite sophisticated, having been developed under a trading economy, with considerable contacts with other peoples, including Hindus. I selected these villages in order to ascertain how far the structural principle which operates in the Kudashimong villages can be found to act also in totally different economic and environmental situations.

19: Nagaon E-5 (1950-1954) 1967 AR? Khasi AR?

I. Setting and Economic Background of Sohkynduh and Kongton

Sohkynduh and Kongton are villages of the Kadashimong,[1] one of the areas under the Cherra Chief. The Kadashimong is situated on the southern slope of the Khasi Hills, in what is called War country. These two villages are situated at the farthest point from both Shella, the centre bordered by the plain, and Cherrapunjee, the seat of the Cherra Chief, one of the centres of the upland Khasi Hills. The people at Cherrapunjee say that these villages are one of the most backward parts of the Khasi Hills. They correspond to Rongdigiri in the Garo Hills, as they lie in the innermost parts and more traditional economic and social settings have been preserved there than in other villages. These are also the reasons why I selected these villages as my field.

It is nine miles to Sohkynduh from Cherrapunjee, crossing two deep valleys towards the east. Kongton is located at the heart of the mountain ranges, ten miles from Cherrapunjee, towards the north-east. It is about twelve miles from Sohkynduh to Kongton, and the way leads through one of the most difficult passes, where even villagers seldom travel. In December, 1955, Sohkynduh was a community of 56 households (List 6), and Kongton of 60 households (List 5). The settlements of both villages are clustered in the southern depressions of a mountain, not far from the summit, a typical location of Khasi villages. Sohkynduh has poor soil, covered with plenty of pieces of stones. The yield therefore is very poor. On the other hand, Kongton, a much older village, enjoys fertile soil, and is one of the most prosperous communities in the Kadashimong.

The major economy of both villages is shifting cultivation. We have already seen, in the chapters on the Garo, the fundamental technique of "jhuming cultivation." The differences between the Garo and the Khasi shifting cultivation are to be found in two aspects: one is the nature of the crops and the other is the type of landownership. In the area, the main crop is millet, while that of the Garo is rice. Besides the shifting cultivation, the Khasi have *pan-leaf* gardens and sometimes pineapple gardens, though on a small scale and not in every household. The most important feature of Khasi shifting cultivation is the development of private ownership. In the tribal area in Assam, such private ownership of the *jhum* field is quite an

1. Kadashimong is the name of a group of villages. Its literal meaning is "twelve villages," and it comprises the following villages: Sohkynduh, Kymmai, Shadawmin, Shnongbah, Shnongpong, Kongton, Shnongpong, Kyllangsohpet, Pdar, Tmaikhan, Umpyrtang, and Umngaw. (Khasi spelling follows the customary usage in Cherra Unit.)

13: Nakane E-5 (1953-1954) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7 ●
Garo AR5

DISCUSSION OF MATRILINEAL SYSTEMS

As a concluding discussion, I shall here deal with the main theoretical problems concerning matrilineal systems as a whole; at the same time, I shall attempt to make clear the structural alignment of the Garo and Khasi systems, together with other matrilineal systems. For this purpose, my analysis is focused particularly on the structure and composition of the descent group, with relation to residential patterns. For my argument it is very important to keep in mind the concept of the descent group. In this discussion, I use the term 'descent group' as constituting a 'corporate property group', more properly, perhaps, this unit should be called the matrilineal inheritance group. Though the discussion deals mainly with matrilineal systems, it also touches upon theoretically important aspects of unilineal systems as a whole.[1]

1. The analysis of matrilineal descent groups has been greatly advanced since Andrew Gulliver's outstanding contribution on the comparative study of Central Bantu matrilineal systems (Gulliver, 1951). Among all, the recent publication of Organized Kinship (Gibbs) by Schneider and Gough, (1961) is a remarkable achievement on the landmark in the series of studies in this field.

My analysis presented here, however, has been developed quite independently from that of Organized Kinship (when the latter was published, the manuscript of this essay had already been sent to the publisher. The publication of this book is extremely delayed). Though some of the issues touch upon the discussions presented in these volumes, particularly of David Schneider's Introduction, the sight of my analysis differs considerably from theirs. Firstly, my analysis is primarily concerned with the differences in the structures of matrilineal systems which Schneider's discussion intends to bring out the distinctive features of matrilineal descent groups in contrast to that of patrilineal systems. Again it is also quite different from that of Kathleen Gough, the major concern of which is the correlation between productivity on ecological and social structures, and also from that of David Aberle's cross-cultural comparison by using a large ethnographic sample. Secondly, the arguments develops from the analysis of the Garo and Khasi social structures, while in that of Schneider, these two matrilineal systems seem to fall in a rather exceptional cases in that they are excluded from a set of the collection of matrilineal systems, on which his theory is based.

13: Nakano E.-S (1955-1956) 1957 AR? Khasi AR? Garo AR?

I

The discussion of Parts I and II reveals that the social structure of the Garo and the Khasi differ greatly. Similarity is found only at the level of the minimum criteria of matrilineal systems: the basic succession rules of mother-daughter, mother's brother-sister's son, and the fact that property is owned by the women, but the controlling power and authority over it are in the hands of the men.

One of the most outstanding structural differences between the two lies in the composition of a property group: the property group of the Khasi is formed by a descent group of a shallow generation depth, while that of the Garo is maintained by the cooperation of two local lines, each of which represents a localized lineage group. Hence the descent group of the former tends to have stronger solidarity, whereas the latter tends to be weakened in its solidarity.

In a broad framework, in terms of social organization, the Garo fall structurally into a category based on the moiety arrangement, in which patrilineal systems, such as the Murngin, and the Kariera, etc., are also to be found. Theoretically, this type of mechanism is operative in either matrilineal or patrilineal systems by the exchange of men in the former and the exchange of women in the latter.

On the other hand, the Khasi system presents many outstanding features of a type which is generally accepted as belonging to matrilineal systems. However, the basic structural traits of this system may also be found among patrilineal systems, in terms of relatively stronger descent group solidarity.

Fig. 11. — Succession Lines of Property and Male in the Khasi Local System

Lines A and B may include several sons, and brother-hood relation respectively, the numbers of classificatory sons give variations to these succession points depend on each matrilineal system.

Though both matrilineal and patrilineal systems may share such basic structural categories, they differ significantly in the following respects in matrilineal systems, the ownership of property and the authority over the property group never rest in one person, as in the case of the father-husband of the patrilineal systems, and the succession to these two offices follows the female line (mother-daughter) and the male line (mother's brother-sister's son) as shown in line A and line B in Fig. 11. This duality of office-holding individuals within the succession rule is the intrinsic cause

15: Nakano E-5 (1953-1954) 1957 AR? Khan: AR? Garo AR?

of complications and variations in matrilineal systems. The matrilineal system is not a mirror of the patrilineal system; it is a different system in which more complicated mechanisms are involved. This complexity of the matrilineal system is a decided handicap when it comes to meeting radical economic changes. In order to preserve the system, a fairly stable economy is required, with balanced ratio of population and resources. This may be one of the reasons for the rapid disintegration or unstability of social organization of matrilineal peoples in the world.

The difficulty of preserving in function both lines *A* and *B* is caused by residential problems—individual marriages which contradict the sibling cohesion. According to my theoretical analysis, there are four alternative ways of resolving such contradictory factors, each case being represented by actual ethnographic samples.[1] Each arrangement represents a different degree of the function of the two lines *A* and *B* in relation to the residential pattern, as following (see Fig. 1):

● ● Male members of the matrilineal line

□ □ Female members of the matrilineal line

Male members of the matrilineal line

FIG. 1.—*Central Case of Matrilineages in Relation to Property Groups and Residential Groups.*

The Garo type. The matrilineal type in Southern Asia, instead of function-ance. The function of both lines *A* and *B* is equally strong. This is kept by the maximum contrast between two local lines, so that it is possible to keep the function of each line against the residential separation of the two lines in one descent group. This type is found at the present only among the Garo.

1. For this discussion I take only such major matrilineal complex for which ample documentation is available.

13: Nakaso E-6 (1953-1954) 1957 AR? Khasi AR? Garo AR?

division of the existing system. This does not necessarily imply that such societies have or had the same organization as other matrilineal societies, but I believe this to be an economic and historical product of the existing structure. I do not question the fact that all these societies are subject to a process of change, but it does seem unnecessary to assume that every factor which happens to be missing nowadays, did, in fact, exist in the past.

Summing up the above discussion, the essential structural differences between the Bonda type and other matrilineal systems are found firstly in the internal structure of its property group: "unilateral" contrasting with the "matrilineal" of the Garo, Nayar, Khasi and Ashanti types. Secondly, in the structure of the wider organization of the residential groups: the clear matrilineal principle is found to act in the composition of matrilineal groups. The focus of the matrilineal operation is quite opposite to that of the household lineage type. In the latter the bilateral features are met with at the wider organizational level. In the Bonda type, in spite of bilateral features in the composition of the residential property group, the rigorous matrilineal group conception is found in the wider organization. Unlike the case of the segmentary-lineage type, this matrilineal group does not have necessarily a direct and actual economic basis. Perhaps the scale of the Bonda society is small enough to maintain the matrilineal social system without a definite economic basis.

In conclusion, such terms as "matrilineal" (unilineal) and "bilateral" are simply convenient labels for the preliminary classification; they should not be used as contrasting criteria for classifying social structure. The unilineal principle (matrilineal system) works differently in each given society, producing as I have observed different structures. Again, descent principle and residence (with landholdings or property) are equally important criteria for the analysis of social organization. The preeminence of either descent or residence should not be theoretically opposed in the arguments of anthropologists, for different degrees and levels of both factors are involved in each given society.

Finally I should like to note that the five major types of matrilineal systems in relation to the internal structure of the property group, which I presented in this discussion, namely the Garo, the Nayar, the Khasi, the Ashanti and the Bonda types, give theoretical criteria for the analysis. It should not be assumed that all matrilineal systems grouped into the same type possess the same structure, but that each possesses the important basic element of its type. Also a system may change from one type to another through important economic changes or migrations: for instance, from the Nayar type to the Ashanti type, or from the Ashanti type to the Bonda type.

13: Nagaon K-5 (1959-1964) 1967 ART Khasi ART

[Jettinga]

The village was founded in 1903 by Khasi immigrants from the Jaintia Hills. At the entrance of the village, a bust of the founder, Lakhmehang Suchiang, stands facing towards the east. It was erected on the occasion of the celebration of their Golden jubilee, in November 1953. Houses are scattered along the ridge of the mountain to the east and to the west; in the centre is the church. All the inhabitants are Christians. Before the Partition this was one of the most modern and prosperous villages in Assam.

Jettinga provides a very interesting instance of the Khasi 'colonial' village. It is surrounded by villages of the Kuki, of the Jemi Naga, and of the Cacharee, who constitute the main population of the North Cachar Hills, and who are tribes entirely different from the Khasi, in economy, social organization, language and culture. Therefore, Jettinga is like an island of Khasi community. I took this village as one of my fields, because I was particularly interested to discover how far the Khasi matrilineal organization is kept up in a community thus situated, surrounded by patrilineal tribes, and considerably modernized by Christianization and economic prosperity; and I was also interested in the process of formation of a new village, in comparison with Riangdaws and Jowbipara in the Garo Hills.

Formation of the Present Population of Jettinga

The first immigrants to Jettinga.

The main population of Jettinga, including the founder, originated in Sutnga village in the Jaintia Hills, twelve miles away from Jowai, the capital of the then Jaintia Raja. This village is situated on the border of the Jaintia Hills and the East Bengal plain, the location being very similar to that of Dullu, as are their culture and economy. In the later part of the nineteenth century, some members of Sutnga village moved to Borkhola, ten miles from Silchar, one of the biggest villages of the then Cacharee king.

These immigrants who came to Borkhola stayed there about fifteen years before they came to Jettinga. Kiarlem, the first daughter of the founder's sister was born there. In November 1953, some Christian Khasi left Borkhola for Jettinga, acting on information gathered from a Welsh Khasi at Nuhing, that the soil of present Jettinga was fertile and fit for their cultivation. They were the first immigrants to Jettinga. The Government record names the following three persons as the first immigrants to Jettinga: Suchiang Lakhmehang, Tarsang, and Suchiar Khasik. In fact, according to the data which I collected at Jettinga, Suchiang Lakhmehang was accompanied by the following persons (the names in brackets indicate the clans):

his wife, Khelem (Phawang);[1]
his brother, Piyotlah, and Piyotlah's wife, Sana (Ryngit),
his sister, Lapilin, and Lapilin's husband, Khasik (Suchiar) with their daughter, Kiarlem, and Khasik's younger brother, Iam,
his friend, Tarsang.

Soon after their settlement, Iam, the brother of Khasik, brought his wife Lukai (Suchiar) from Jaintia. Khelem brought her younger sister, Dimilem. Tarsang also came with Lakhmehang afterwards called his wife, Pakong. But having spent some time there, they left eventually for another place, as Suc-

1. Khelem was a native of the Cherrapunjee area of the Khasi Hills (not of Jaintia like the others). She was a school teacher at Cherrapunjee, and later became a teacher of a school near Jowai, where she married Lakhmehang.

CHAPTER III

The Border Area

3.1 Definition of Border Area.—The term 'border area' although very frequently used does not refer to any well demarcated area. It was, therefore, decided after a joint discussion between the Director of Statistics with the Deputy Commissioners of the districts and Subdivisional Officers, Jowai, that area within 10 miles of the India-Pak border line would be considered as the 'border area' for the purpose of the present survey. The list of the villages falling in this area was supplied by the Deputy Commissioner and the Subdivisional Officer.

3.2 Condition of the Border Area before partition.—The border area under review then comprised of the southern slopes of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills and a narrow strip of plains adjoining the southern slopes running along the Pakistan border. The area actually had a length of about 120 miles, roughly from Mahendiganj on the west to Sonapur on the east thus covering an area of 3,840 sq. miles approximately, comprising of 400 villages inhabited by population of 70 thousands.

Barring the forests and rocky top plateaus the plains are utilised for the production of valuable cash crops on favourable soils. These slopes provide suitable soil and climate for the production, inter alia, oranges, pineapples and other fruits. The harvest of rich yields which such plantations give to the cultivators place them, more densely inhabited and economically advanced than so-call upland peoples from the topographic of the area. Even the most inaccessible spots in the slopes has been harvested into rich orchards, wherefrom the produce was carried by headloads over steep gradients for several miles. Due to steep gradients little arable land, except some jhooming here and there, could be made of this area.

Because of the very topography, this belt had its natural communications with Sylhet district and forming part of East Pakistan. From time immemorial the area had a flourishing trade with Sylhet district. It was a resource centre. The cash crops found ready buyers in the people of Sylhet, from whom in turn the people in the border area obtained supplies of rice, fish, vegetables and other necessaries of daily life. There is generations have thus enjoyed a very prosperous and self-sufficient economy. The rich heritage in the border area villages which are now teeming away, lost whatever necessary to the past prosperity of the border economy.

With the partition of the country in 1947, made with the choice of Sylhet, now forming part of East Pakistan, was removed. As a result the whole economy of this region was completely destroyed and the countryside which was teemed with activity and abundance was overshadowed with unemployment, poverty and despair. Of the most essential necessity of the border people has the market in East Pakistan. For want of communication facilities the produce could not be

questions and collect his facts compiled without knowledge of Professor Lauterbach-Lévi's work, and before he very kindly sent a private copy of this work, which had not been available to me previously.

The present paper offers data on the following subjects:

1. Khasi kinship terms from the Standard Khasi plateau-area in the Khyrim State, about 20 to 30 miles south-east of Shillong, which are in some minor details different from the Shanglibing data, collected by Lauterbach-Lévi, south-west of Shillong;
2. Comparative data from the War-Khasi;
3. from the plateau-area of Jowai in the Jaintia* Hills, and
4. from the War-Jaintia;
5. Aspects of the Khasi kinship terms, with special reference to the matrilineal order of society, and to the respective position of women and men there, especially the particular consideration which the biological relationship through the father receives in kinship terminology, in spite of the emphasis on the matrilineal structure in Khasi society (comp. item No. 1 of the list and its discussion in para. 10 of the present paper, on p. 296).

The data here collected in field enquiries to which I was enabled by the Research Grants for comparative studies in matrilineal civilizations of India, given by the Viking Fund Inc. (now: Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research) in New York, during the periods 1950-51 and 1954-55. My grant-holders in the Foundation for enabling me to carry out these field researches, as well as to the University of Madras, for granting me fellowship leave for the same purpose, is here most gratefully recorded.

My research programme was based on the first tentative working hypothesis, laid down in my book "Brother-right in India"[1], but includes also various other aspects of study which have not been pre-planned, or even considered there[2], as for instance also the present comparative study of kinship terms in areas of two Khasi dialects and with special significance to the Khasi matrilineal social system. The material was collected during a five months house-to-house study in the recently founded Plateau Khasi village Mawlyai, during April and May 1954. This village contained nearly all houses owned by Khasi clan sisters and inhabited by them, with their families, after they had left the ancestral home in the main village Khyrwing, about two miles across the valley on the western side of the new settlement. The ancestral family houses there were in the possession of either the mothers or, if she was no more alive, the youngest daughter of the family, the so-called Khadduh[3].

* Jaintia, (Pnar or "Synteng") are the Khasi speaking eastern neighbours of the Khasi proper. Its people, the Khyn or pre-Khasi people in the west-plateau highlands are in many ways different from those who settled in the hilly Jaintia-plateau at the eastern fringe, with Khasi-Jaintia sub-tribes of the Khasi-Jaintia-Synteng-Pnar-Jaintia-Khyn-Lyngngam-Bhoi-Lyngngam-Bhoi-Jaintia-Khyn-Lyngngam-Bhoi-Jaintia-Khyn-Lyngngam-Bhoi-Jaintia-Khyn